

SUMMARY OF 1986 EVENTS

Each year for the past five or six years, a few hearty souls brave cold and wind to have a picnic on Rose Island. 1986 got off to a great start with about 30 people bringing their own picnics, snuggling around bon fires on the beach and watching the TRUE diehards like Tom Benson and Taff Roberts who sailed out to the island!!

On March 9, the Rose Island Lighthouse was featured in Gerry Goldstein's article "Lights Out--can our lighthouses be saved?" printed in the Sunday Journal Magazine. The publicity gained us more than a few new members, as well as lighthouse "owners" who purchased shingles, bricks and windows. In addition, it generated interest by the American Express Foundation which in August became the first supporting foundation with its grant of \$5,000.

On the much less visible side of things, the "red tape" was fearlessly being dealt with by Curt Bunting, Bruce Bartlett and Glenn Gardiner, as the rehab plans were submitted to the Department of the Interior for approval.

May was a month for meetings with various foundations, including the Rhode Island Foundation and AMEX. Grant applications were drawn up and sent out. We sat back for a moment and crossed our fingers then set about the work for the summer.

Floats which had been found by Chris Barlow were donated to us by Pilot's Point Marina in Connecticut. Approval for a temporary floating dock system was granted by the CRMC and, thanks to the efforts of dedicated volunteers, the docks were in place for the annual clambake.

Held annually as part of Save the Bay's Newport Harbor Appreciation Week, the July 11th clambake was supposed to be limited to 150, but we managed to feed 200 people! The decision was made on the spot to notify members before the general public when tickets will be available for 1987's bake, scheduled for July 10.

Right after the clambake, on July 14th, we received approval from the Department of the Interior to go ahead with the rehabilitation of the Lighthouse. Volunteers signed up for work sessions on Saturday mornings to gut the lighthouse of its deteriorated plaster.



NO MORE LEAKS! Bill O'Hanley of Newport Roofing and Virgil Slyter from Duro-Last inspect the new membrane roof installed last summer.



The Saturday work sessions were expanded to include Wednesday afternoons and the work progressed by leaps and bounds as the plaster was piled on! The roof was recovered with a membrane-type roofing, the windows in the light tower -- the original glass long gone -- were replaced with lexan, and the tower roof made weather tight.

An August visit to the lighthouse by Barbara Cervone of the Rhode Island Foundation led to that organization's award of a \$10,000 matching grant in October. With that challenge in mind, the Board approved the first annual raffle for a \$10,000 vacation anywhere in the world and the effort to meet the challenge grant was on. Publicity from Barbara Polichetti's *Providence* Journal story in November brought in more contributors, not only to buy raffle tickets, but to buy pieces of the lighthouse.

Strong local support for the lighthouse project was demonstrated by the Newport Garden Club which bought the tower for \$3,000 in November. And the kind of sentiment the lighthouse project has thrived on was demonstrated when Senator Eleanor Sasso (Cranston) and her husband gave us \$3,000 for the catwalk -- which we'll be calling the "Rose Walk" in memory of Mr. Sasso's mother, Rose!

Bruce Bartlett and Chris Zepp worked to apply for a Rhode Island Coastal Community Assistance Program grant which resulted in an award of \$20,000 to the City of Newport, \$12,000 of which is earmarked for the lighthouse project.

On December 10, the Rose Island Lighthouse was recommended for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places by the Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission, and the year ended with our planning for the New Year's Day picnic, 1987 and the raffle drawing party to be held on February 1, 1987.

Charlotte Johnson, Secretary

\$10,000 DREAM VACATION RAFFLE

In order to match a \$10,000 grant from the Rhode Island Foundation, the Rose Island Lighthouse Foundation started dreaming up ideas for fundraisers. A raffle was conceived, similar to other successful raffles in the area, which would offer tickets at \$100 each, limited to a total of 300 for a \$10,000 first prize dream vacation.

Working with Nancy Richardson and Laura Goldstein of Connections Travel on Pelham Street, the Foundation offered an \$8,000 travel coupon plus \$2,000 cash first prize and four other prizes of \$100 each.

On Sunday, February first, a happy and expectant group gathered in the main dining room of the Clarke Cooke House. Outside, ice and snow lay frozen on the street, while inside, a fire burned brightly in the large Colonial fireplace. The many small tables were decorated with fresh flowers, while the bar and buffet were set with wine, cheese and many varied and delicious hors d'oeuvre donated by our gracious hosts.

The group of about 125 people learned that while not all of the tickets had been sold, the profit was still sufficient to match the Rhode Island Foundation Grant.

Winners were drawn in reverse order with the \$100 prizes won by Nancy Hemmerich, Robin Wallace, Fran Meroney and Joe Bossom. The first prize Dream Vacation was won by Gary and Carol Cummins of 40 Walnut Street in Newport.

The Rose Island Lighthouse Foundation plans to make this vacation raffle an annual event, so maybe you will be a winner next time!

Virginia Wood, Raffle Party Chairperson

However, welcome as all this attention is, none of it could have happened, nor will it continue to happen, without YOU, the membership, your on-going support, your dues and your labor! YOU are the backbone of the organization and the need for your support continues.

Thanks to Micrographix, we will be using a new mailing system which will alert you when it is time to pay your dues. Your mailing label shows the status of your membership, giving the fiscal year you are active.

The Foundation's fiscal year runs from July first to June 30, so if you have an "87" on your mailing label, you are paid up through June 30, 1987. We hope you'll want to make it an "88" by sending in your membership renewal at this time.

Because of the popularity of our events--particularly the July clam bake on Rose Island--we will be offering tickets to the membership first before announcing plans to the general public. We hope you will keep your membership up so you won't be left out!

Dana Magee, Membership Chairperson



VISIT TO NEW ALCHEMY INSTITUTE

Concerned with how we are going to deal with solid waste disposal, electrical power, heat, and water purification, a delegation from the Board recently visited the New Alchemy Institute in East Falmouth, Massachusetts. While acknowledging there is still much to learn, the board is leaning towards adding yet another dimension to the Lighthouse project: an environmental center--specifically, an educational, historical, marine environmental center.

In a short time the Board will be drawing up a job description for a keeper who will need to have a diverse enough background to become the director of this exciting multi-faceted project.

TEAR OFF HERE

NAME _____ PHONE () _____

ADDRESS _____ City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____
Street

● Please renew my membership in the Rose Island Lighthouse Foundation for the year ending June 30, 1988, in the following category:

_____ \$5 Individual _____ \$25 Business _____ \$250 Supporting
_____ \$10 Family _____ \$100 Contributing _____ \$500 Founding

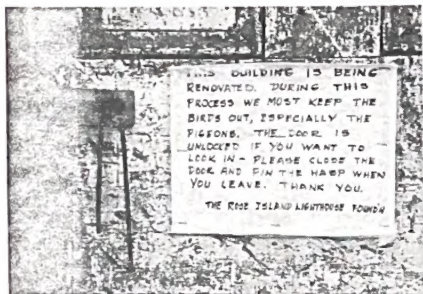
● Yes, I will be coming to the Annual Meeting on Sunday, May 17 at the Museum of Yachting at Fort Adams. I would like to buy _____ box lunches at \$6.00 each.

● I would like to volunteer my services and/or materials as follows: _____ Office

_____ Newsletter _____ Fundraising _____ Public Relations _____ Construction labor

Other _____

NOTE: Contributions to the Rose Island Lighthouse Foundation are deductible within legal limits for U.S. Income Tax purpose. Please mail your check to the Rose Island L/H Foundation, P.O. Box 1419 Newport, Rhode Island 02840. Thank You!



SIGN ON THE LIGHTHOUSE DOOR continues to happily surprise us each time we go out to the lighthouse. While there is evidence (usually in the form of empty beer cans) that people have been in the building during out absence, we have found the pin placed back in the hasp, the pigeons have been kept out, and the vandalism has been virtually halted.

You can imagine, therefore, how impressed people are when we are asking for a large donation or a grant and they see this sign. It's only a shirt cardboard in its plastic bag, but it has encouraged the kind of cooperation from pure strangers that this lighthouse hasn't seen in decades!

THANKS TO ALL OF YOU WHO APPRECIATE THIS WONDERFUL BUILDING AND ITS SURROUNDINGS!

LIGHTHOUSE FOR SALE

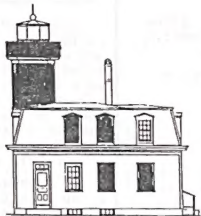
...Bit by bit and piece by piece, that is.

LIGHTHOUSE "SALES" are coming along very well with seven windows, the tower and the catwalk already sold. For more information call Charlotte Johnson, Foundation Secretary, at 847-4454. Other prices are:

Shingles	\$25.00
Bricks	\$50.00
Roof pieces	\$250.00
Windows	\$500.00
Doors	\$750.00



EAST ELEVATION



SOUTH ELEVATION



WEST ELEVATION



NORTH ELEVATION



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September, 1987 No. 4

STORIES OF LIFE AT THE LIGHTHOUSE

Have you ever wondered what it was like to live at the Rose Island Lighthouse at the turn of the century or during the War?

We were very fortunate in having a number of ex-lighthouse dwellers share their experiences with us at our Annual Meeting in May. Besides hearing a "modern" account of how much brass he had to polish from board-member and ex-Coast Guardsman Neil Fox who was stationed at Rose Island during the 50's, we also heard of times long gone from Charles S. Curtis' grandchildren, all of whom are active members of our Lighthouse Foundation.

Charles Curtis and his wife Christina MacPhee Curtis were in the Lighthouse Service and lived at the Rose Island Lighthouse from 1889 to 1918. Their daughter, Mabel Curtis Chase (who lived to the age of 102) was the mother of Wanton Chase, Norman Chase, and Christina Chase Perrotta, all of Newport, and Mabel Chase Moran of South Dartmouth, Mass. Their visits with their grandparents at the lighthouse between 1907 and 1918 were the source of great pleasure for them, which they were kind enough to share with us.



TWO CHRISTINAS seated at the door of the Rose Island lighthouse about 1918. They are Christina Chase Perrotta of Newport and her grandmother, Christina MacPhee Curtis of Nova Scotia. The younger Christina remembers her grandmother making her dress. Notice the high button shoes.



GRANDCHILDREN OF CHARLES AND CHRISTINA CURTIS about 1914 on the rocks at Rose Island. From left to right they are Mabel, Norman, Wanton and Christina. Note the keeper's boat house and ways behind them to the left.

An instructional as well as entertaining time, we saw photos of the mechanical device to ring the fog bell before the horn was installed. We learned of the old clapboards under those shingles, of the oyster beds on the northwest shore of the island, that ice wasn't used in the kitchen at the lighthouse, and grandmother Curtis' most effective tool was a straight razor, which she used to remove stone bruises and fishhooks from feet and fingers. Ouch!

Wanton Chase, now age 78, narrated slides of photographs from their family's album which inspired his older siblings to join in from their seats in the audience. Their colorful stories ranged from the order of the bath to the time the dead horse washed up on the beach to the time an uncle dropped his false teeth in the "post office". (You know, the little building behind the lighthouse with the hole out the bottom?)

Continued on page 2

During World War I, the children needed special passes to visit their grandfather and traveled to the lighthouse under Navy escort. Security was tight and even though the children were not allowed to leave the lighthouse compound, on one occasion, Wanton came close to being shot as a spy... "Oh heavens no! Life was never dull at the lighthouse!" Wanton exclaimed. We were certainly convinced!



TURN OF THE CENTURY photo shows Charles Curtis and family at the Rose Island Lighthouse before the addition was built for the assistant keeper.

ANNUAL MEETING REPORT

On May 17 at the Museum of Yachting, our Annual Meeting was held. Our President, Curt Bunting, chaired a brief business meeting and gave us the glorious news that our fund-raising efforts have yielded \$45,000 to date. This included funds presently in our account, plus those funds on the way from a \$10,000 matching grant we were awarded by the Rhode Island Foundation and a \$12,000 grant from the State of Rhode Island.

In addition, we voted to amend our by-laws to allow the general membership to elect directors to fill vacancies in the event one of our founding organizations withdraws, as was the case this year with the Lower Thames Neighborhood Association.

The by-laws previously provided for 20 directors to sit on the board: One from each of 11 founding organizations which at the outset supported the city's acquisition of the lighthouse, six from the general membership, two from the City staff, and one from the City Council.

We still have 20 directors but now have only ten directors elected from founding organizations and seven elected from the general membership, with two from the City staff and one from the City Council. Please feel free to contact any of the directors listed, either for information about the lighthouse project, to share your ideas with us or to volunteer to help.

Curtis W. Bunting, Pres....General Membership
Bruce T. Bartlett, V.Pres....Newport City Staff
Gary Esposito, Treas.....General Membership
Charlotte Johnson, Sect'y.....Island Ecology
Lawrence Allen.....General Membership
Alfred L. Angel.....Newport Taxpayers Assoc.
Thomas T. Benson*.....Museum of Yachting
Victor Farmer.....Friends of the Waterfront
Neil T. Fox.....General Membership
Glen R. Gardiner.....General Membership
Sidney S. Gorham, III.....Ochre Point Assoc.
John H. Howard.....Point Association
Patrick G. Kirby, II.....Hill Association
Dr. Neil Leerssen.....Agassiz Beach Assoc.
Dana Magee.....General Membership
Laurice Parfet.....Newport City Council
Ann Twomey.....Fifth Ward Improvement Assoc.
Hugh Whittle.....General Membership
Virginia B. Wood.....Save The Bay
Christopher Zepp.....Newport City Staff

*Vacancy not yet filled at press time.



TRIP THE LIGHTHOUSE FANTASTIC RAFFLE

If you won a \$10,000 vacation, where would you go? Would you take a lot of little trips or spend it on one long vacation to an exotic paradise? Would you put together a whole family reunion or take off on the honeymoon of a lifetime? The choice is up to you in the second annual Rose Island Lighthouse Foundation \$10,000 vacation raffle fundraiser.

Begun last year, the raffle is our biggest money-maker for the restoration of the lighthouse and its surrounding acre and a half grounds. In one respect, everyone became a winner in last year's fundraiser, because the proceeds allowed us to match an additional \$10,000 grant from the Rhode Island Foundation.

The first prize is a \$10,000 vacation you can take anywhere in the world. It consists of a \$7,000 travel coupon from Gulliver's Travel, plus \$3,000 cash. Second through fifth prizes are \$100 cash. Tickets cost \$100 each, but are limited to 300, so your chances of winning first prize are one in 300, and you can pitch in with one or more friends to buy a ticket and share the \$10,000 prize.

Tickets may be purchased by cash, check or MasterCard/Visa charge. Call Charlotte Johnson at 847-4454 for more information or to order your ticket by phone. You may also pick up your ticket at Gulliver's Travel on Washington Square or send us the order form in this newsletter along with your payment.

Ticket holders are invited to bring a guest to the wine and cheese drawing party at the Clarke Cooke House on Sunday evening, October 25 from 4:00 to 5:30 p.m. If you haven't already contributed to this worthwhile project, now's your chance to come on board and help save the Rose Island lighthouse.



THE BEST CLAMBAKE MAKES THE NEWS

This year the July 10th clambake on Rose Island was Newport Harbor Appreciation Week's best-attended event. Over 200 people gathered to celebrate the lighthouse by feasting on food from the bay, and a number of our members were featured that night on the 11:00 pm Channel 6 news.

We had expected to have Senator John Chafee with us, but his duties in Washington prevented him at the last minute from attending. Nevertheless, we were bolstered by a strong message of support delivered by the Senator's aide Michael Ryan. Mike told us of a \$15 million bill which the Senator has cosponsored with George Mitchell to help restore the nation's lighthouses on a matching grant basis, and it appears at this time that at least \$2.5 to \$3 million will be budgeted for fiscal year 1988. We hope to hear more on this shortly.

As Mike also pointed out, what is lacking for projects such as ours is money, not enthusiasm. Enthusiasm for our project was demonstrated both by the tremendous turnout for the clambake as well as the support we received from local suppliers and restaurants who either provided at their cost or donated food, beverages and services to ensure the success of our sold-out event.

We are particularly grateful to Empty Pockets Farm bakermaster Chris Barlow who delighted us with mussels donated by Blue Gold Mussel Farm, lobsters from Aquidneck Lobster, bread and butter donated by the White Horse Tavern, sweet corn from Crest Farm, and a totally island-grown salad from the Farm-lands of the Clarke Cooke House. Ice came from Eastern Ice Company and donations of wine, beer and soda came from Fifth Ward Liquor, Aidinoff's, Bay Company Wine, Bucci's Package Store, Vicker's Liquors, Wellington Square Liquors and the Rum Runner. And finally, we got everyone out to the island and back with the help of Ron Ackman. Our special thanks to you all for a wonderful bake!

----- TEAR OFF HERE -----

Name _____ Phone () _____

Address _____ Street _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

My/Our membership dues are enclosed for the year ending June 30, 1988 as follows:

☐ \$5 Individual ☐ \$25 Business ☐ \$250 Supporting ☐ New
☐ \$10 Family ☐ \$100 Contributing ☐ \$500 Founding ☐ Renewal \$ _____

I/We would like to buy _____ Trip the Lighthouse Fantastic Raffle tickets at \$100 each \$ _____

I/We would like to make an additional contribution to the lighthouse in the amount of \$ _____

☐ Payment Enclosed ☐ VISA ☐ MasterCard TOTAL PAYMENT = \$ _____

Card Number Exp. Date -
Month Year

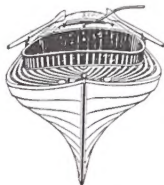
Signature _____

Clip and mail this form to P.O. Box 1419, Newport, RI 02840 or call (401) 847-4454 to place your ticket order by phone. Contributions to the Rose Island Lighthouse Foundation are deductible within legal limits for U.S. income tax purpose.

THOMAS TEW BENSON
1936 - 1987

On Friday, August 14, 1987, Newport lost one of its most progressive citizens, Tom Benson. Tom was known on the basis of his demonstrated capabilities as a historian, preservationist, environmentalist, architect, yachtsman, organizer, executive and as one of the founders of the Rose Island Lighthouse Foundation. His interest, advice, and counsel in our problem areas were always timely and helpful. His enthusiasm for our goal--to restore the lighthouse and make the site an environmentally sound public historic landmark--was a continuous source of strength and reassurance.

It is with deep regret that we mark his passing, but it is also with deep appreciation that we had him as an integral part of our program and that we will always sense his presence as we achieve our future goals.



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